The Story of The Paltz

DIE PFALZ AM RHEIN

The Story of The Paltz

Being A
Brief History of New Paltz, N. Y.

A COMPILATION

NINETEEN HUNDRED AND FIFTEEN

To the brave Huguenots who found
the Wallkill Valley,
To the men and women who have loved
the Shawangunks,
To all who may come to dwell in the
shadow of our hills,
this booklet is dedicated, with a
Prayer,
that the religious fervor of
our forefathers
may dwell in this Valley forever.

Our Ancestors

THE mountains hem us in. Beyond the mountains lies the world—a turbulent world of storm and struggle and opportunity. But the sturdy Shawangunks lift up their blue barrier and hold it back so that we in little old New Paltz can sleep on beside the drowsy Wallkill almost as we slept two hundred years ago.

We love our mountain with its patchwork sides of cultivated fields and woodland and its rugged crown of rocks. It is beautiful in autumn when lines of blazing sumac mark the fence rows and its woods are the color of wine and mahogany; and in winter when the glow of sunrise and the mists that creep up from the lowlands paint its blanket of snow with rose and amethyst. But we love it best in June when the woods are the fresh green of early summer and the wind goes billowing through its fields of daisies and yellow ripening grain.

It was in June two centuries and a half ago that Catharine DuBois clambered wearily up and down its steep sides and all about her the

laurel must have been bursting into bloom. But she had little heart for the beauty of it then, with Baby Jacques pressed close in her arms, for they were captives of the Indians and the story of their rescue is the story of how New Paltz came to be settled by our ancestors. Yes, the stranger must summer and winter our mountain and then he will begin to understand why our peace-loving forefathers tarried on in the valley at its feet for generation after generation with little inclination to drift back into the world outside. For a harsh, cruel world it had been to them for many a long year, driven as they had been from pillar to post and from post to pillar because of their religious belief.

Cruelly persecuted, they had fled from their sunny, native France to the Palatinate in Germany where they found safety for a time. Soon the soldiers of the wicked French King crossed the border and began harassing the poor Huguenots there and so our ancestors made their way to Holland and one by one or in small family groups set sail for the New World in some such slow sailing Dutch craft as carried Hendrick Hudson a little more than half a century before. In the New World which had beckoned them with such fair promises they did find what they

COVERED BRIDGE OVER WALLKILL AT FOOT OF MAIN STREET

wanted most—freedom to worship God—from the very beginning, but they scarcely found peace. One day Louis DuBois, the leader of the men who afterward settled New Paltz, came home to find his house in ashes and his wife and three little children gone, stolen by the Indians.

When Louis with his wife and children, fresh from the sea voyage, had hurried up the Hudson to Wiltwyck (Kingston) to join his wife's family there, he found the little Dutch trading-post just emerging from the throes of what history calls "The First Esopus Indian War." It had gone hard enough with the little settlement in the wilderness, but the white men had brought it all upon themselves, for, as usual, the poor Indian was more sinned against than sinning. The old chiefs had given warning time and time again that they could not be responsible for their young braves when under the influence of liquor, yet still the whiskey flowed freely, for the clink of money in the till then as now was more persuasive than the oratory of sachems. But it seems that selling the Indians fire water was not enough. One night a party of young braves who had been husking corn for a Wiltwyck farmer got into a drunken frolic. They had

built a fire by the side of a brook and were having a glorious time all by themselves, hair-pulling, and howling at the top of their voices so loudly that the noise was heard within the stockade at Wiltwyck. Although some soldiers who went out to reconnoitre brought back word as to the harmless nature of the disturbance, ten young Dutchmen sallied out and attempted to massacre the savages as they lay sleeping about their fire. This was the final act of injustice, the last straw as it were, to bring on the war.

As soon as peace was declared and it was safe to leave the stockade and think again about the planting and gathering of crops, Governor Stuyvesant having been petitioned for more of the fertile untimbered lowlands where the Indians had raised corn and beans, a "NewVillage" (Hurley) was started a few miles south of Wiltwyck. And here Louis DuBois settled with Matthew Blanshan, his wife's father, and Antoine Crispell, his brother-in-law, all of them God-fearing Huguenots who doubtless had found little to their liking in the riotous trading-post at Wiltwyck where the streets resounded from morning to night with the clattering tongues of the Dutch housewives and from night to morning with the brawls of drunken sailors.

LOWLANDS OF WALLKILL

But peace was not for them yet. One day, it was June 7, 1663, the men came home from the lowlands to find every house in the village destroyed by fire, only the smouldering ashes, an unfinished barn, a rick and a stack of reeds to show that a village had been there. Not a living soul was there to welcome them and tell the tale, only three dead men who lay where they had fallen. As for the women and children, they had been carried off, prisoners of the Indians, and it seemed that immediate death might be a fate to be preferred. Wiltwyck had suffered too, though not so deeply, for help came before the savages had time to finish their work there; but in all from the two villages some forty-five women and children were missing, and doughty old Governor Stuyvesant lost no time in hurrying up from New Amsterdam Capt. Martin Kregier with all the soldiers he could muster for the rescue. For he knew, down deep in his heart, that if he had kept his promise to the Red Men, to pay them for the lowland-gardens he had taken from them to give to the settlers at the New Village, and if he had not been so hasty about sending twenty of their number, prisoners of the recent war, to be slaves in the unhealthy island of Curacoa—the deepest insult he

could inflict upon freedom-loving savages—they never would have committed this last outrage.

Before the soldiers arrived Louis and his comrades tried to do what they could to seek out the whereabouts of their loved ones, but little was accomplished for the woods were so thick that even Kit Davis, the local "pathfinder," as soon as he left the waterways lost himself though only a few miles from the stockade; moreover there was constant danger of being surprised by the Indians. But one thing they did do. Every evening Domine Blom led his little congregation to the four corners of the fort and there under the blue sky offered up prayer that the absent ones might be returned.

Early in July the soldiers reached Wiltwyck and then one expedition after another was made into the wilderness wherever news could be obtained of an Indian encampment. Sometimes they returned empty handed, sometimes with booty, blankets, kettles and sewan and a few Indians whom they had captured. Now and then they succeeded in rescuing a white captive. One long and arduous journey they made with wagons and cannon and a force of over two hundred men through swamps and over mountains to the Indian fortress at War-

SHAWANGUNK KILL AT NEW FORT

warsing where they destroyed the great Council-house of all the Esopus Indian clans. It had been rumored that the majority of the white prisoners were kept here, but the fort had been abandoned just before the rescuing party reached it. And so the summer dragged on and Louis as he returned from one expedition after another must have been growing almost hopeless of ever seeing his wife and children again. Then, when it seemed that no stone had been left unturned, word was brought by a friendly Wappinger Indian that the Red Men were guarding a large party of prisoners at Shawangunk where they were building a new fort to replace the old one at Warwarsing which the soldiers had destroyed. It was early in September. It had been raining for days and the streams were all swollen to overflowing when Capt. Kregier set out with the Wappinger for guide and a party of fifty men; and we know that Louis was among them, though the Captain does not mention by name the "seven freemen" who accompanied the soldiers.

And what of Catharine all these months? History gives us no word of her but it is not hard to picture her those first sad days of her captivity as she bravely trudged along through

the green woods beside her captors with Baby Jacques in her arms and little Abraham and Isaac clinging to her skirts. All the way to the Indian stronghold at Warwarsing we think she was driven, and then when late in July news was brought that the soldiers were coming she was hurried away with the other prisoners to this Indian settlement on the banks of the Shawangunk Kill. Here the Indians soon began to build a new stronghold. Every evening the prisoners were carried off into the woods lest a rescuing party might surprise the fort in the night.

One day early in September a panic seized the Red Men, a fear that the soldiers were surely coming again. They could retreat no farther, for they depended on their corn and beans to carry them through the winter and all their other plantations the soldiers had already destroyed. Very well! They had taken good care of these white women and children. But if they were to be thwarted in their plans to hold them as hostages until their own brothers who had been shipped as slaves to Curacoa should be returned to them, there was still time to take a bitter revenge.

So squaws were sent out to gather faggots and

BASHA SPRING ON BANK OF SHAWANGUNK KILL

they were laid in piles. The white women were brought forward. All was ready. The light had only to be applied. Then it was that Catharine began to sing:

> "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept when we remembered Zion.
> We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof.
> For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion."

She sang while the savages stood motionless around. Perhaps she had sung to them so before for their amusement, and they had demanded it once more for the last time; perhaps she had a presentiment that her rescuers were near and she must do something, anything to gain time; perhaps she did it only to keep up courage to the end. All at once a shot rang out on the September air and some strange hounds nosed through the circle of listeners. Then the savages with a terrified cry, "White men's dogs!" rushed to seize their weapons but the soldiers were so close upon them that resistance was in vain and the chief and many of his warriors were slain.

All this we know from the stories which have come down to us from the days of Louis. They

tell, moreover, how the rescuing party, in the words of the Wappinger guide, followed the "first Big Water" (Rondout Kill) till they came to the second (Wall Kill), and the second till they came to the third (Shawangunk Kill). How Louis, always pressing in advance of the soldiers, killed with his sword an Indian scout at Libertyville just as he was about to let fly his deadly arrow. How he shot another Indian, a squaw, getting water at a spring in the hillside below the fort. And the spring bears her name, Basha, to this very day.

Journeying leisurely back toward Wiltwyck with his little family about him, his fears for the future lulled by the happiness of the present, Louis must have been attracted by the fertility of the lowlands along the Wallkill and the hope was born that some day he and a company of friends might start the nucleus of a French settlement there. But it was not until fourteen years afterwards and the colony of New York had passed from the hands of the Dutch to the English, and Abraham and Isaac were men grown, that he saw his hopes realized. Edmund Andross was at that time Governor of New York and there was at Hurley a young Huguenot, Abraham Hasbrouck, who had served

MOGGONCK—NOW SKY TOP

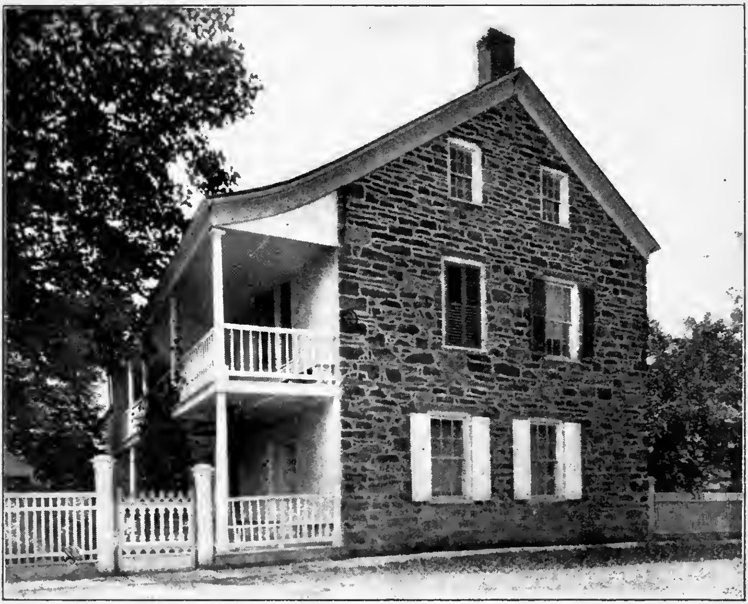
with Andross in the English army. Through him a patent for a large tract of land lying between the Shawangunk Mountains and the Hudson River, its four corners being Moggonck (Mohonk), Juffrou's Hook (the point in the Hudson where the town line between Lloyd and Marlborough strikes the river), Rapoos (an island in the Hudson near the estate of Judge Parker) and Tower a Taque (a point of white rock in the Shawangunks near Rosendale Plains), was granted Louis and his two oldest sons, Abraham and Isaac, and nine other Huguenots who had settled in Hurley,—Christian Deyo, Abraham Hasbrouck, Andries LeFevre, Jean Hasbrouck, Pierre Deyo, Louis Bevier, Antoine Crispell, Hugo Frēre and Simon LeFevre.

Louis had not forgotten the trouble at the New Village because the Indians received nothing but promises for the land which was taken from them. And so in May 1677, four months before the New Paltz patent was granted by the Governor, the land was duly purchased of the Indians. And this is the price that was paid:—forty kettles, ten large, thirty small; forty axes; forty adzes; forty shirts; four hundred fathoms of white net-work; three hundred

fathoms of black net-work; sixty pairs of stockings, half small sizes; one hundred bars of lead; one keg of powder; one hundred knives; four kegs of wine; forty oars; forty pieces of "duffel" (heavy woolen cloth); sixty blankets; one hundred needles; one hundred awls; one measure of tobacco; two horses, one stallion, one mare. Besides they were to pay every year as rent to a government official at the redoubt in Esopus, five bushels of good winter wheat.

Early the next spring these Patentees left Hurley with their families to establish on the banks of the Wallkill their new home, which they called New Paltz in memory of the old Palatinate on the Rhine which had given them refuge before they fled to the New World.

MEMORIAL HOUSE



OLD FORT

Our Houses

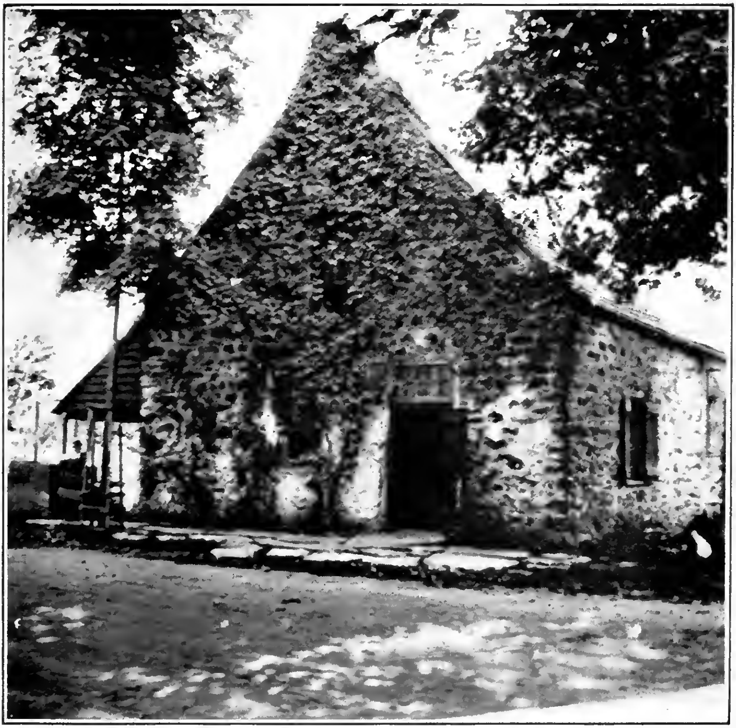
WITH their household goods stowed away in three big carts, our ancestors chose for their first camp-ground the lowlands on the west side of the Wallkill. These lowlands, like those most fertile along the Esopus and Shawangunk Kills, had probably been cleared of timber many years before by the Indians to be used for plantations of corn and beans. But when the Patentees came to build, advised by the friendly Indians, they chose the other side of the river where the spring freshets could not bother them. The first cabins were probably built where the old stone houses still stand on Huguenot Street, skirting the river rather closely (for a running stream was a necessary convenience to a French housewife on wash days) and yet well out of reach of high water. They were of logs with stone chimneys, none too commodious, but homes of sufficient comfort for the demands of the times. All the men worked together to build their houses as well as to cultivate the crops.

First of all to be built and largest of all was

the house of Louis, which stood half way from either end of the street and was to be used as a fort in case of an attack by the Indians, for Gov. Andross had granted the Patentees permission to settle on their newly acquired land, only "Provided they build a Redoute there first for a place of Retreat and Safeguard upon Occasion."

Some ten or twelve years later the cabins were enlarged, but it was not until a generation after the settling of New Paltz that the stone houses on Huguenot Street which are still standing to-day, were built. Though some of them have been enlarged and in other ways altered, all have kept their characteristic dignity, simplicity and strength, which style speaks to us eloquently of the spirit of their builders.

The Memorial House was built in 1712 by Jean Hasbrouck, the Patentee. It is of generous proportions even for modern times, and Jean, as he intended, had plenty of room to store away in the attic under the steeply sloping rafters as much as a granary would hold of harvested grain. The house remained for generation after generation in the Hasbrouck family, the north front room being used by them during Revolutionary times as a store. The bar



ELTING HOMESTEAD

HOME OF ABRAHAM HASBROUCK

which did duty when West India rum was as necessary a commodity as goose shot or molasses may still be seen in the attic.

Next on the site of the first "Redoute," we have the Fort, the home of the descendants of Louis. He had died before the date of its building which was 1705, attested to by the iron figures on the gable end toward the street. This house must have been indeed a refuge of hospitality for the whole community. It was here that the cousins who rode in from the surrounding country on winter Sundays were wont to repair before entering the cold unheated church, to fill their little footstoves with glowing coals from the big fireplace. But to seek refuge here from an enemy was never necessary and never a shot was fired in defense from the blinking portholes, for the Indians who had been kindly treated from the beginning gave nothing but kindness in return.

Across the street from the Fort is the Elting Homestead. Built either by the Patentee, Louis Bevier, or his son Samuel, it passed about 1740 into the possession of Capt. Josiah Elting, the most prominent man of Dutch ancestory in the community, and here during Revolutionary times his son, Roelif J.,

ran a rival store to the Hasbroucks. Under the cellar in the Elting House may still be found the old sub-cellar or wine cellar where in olden times liquors were kept safe from pilfering slaves.

The House of Abraham Hasbrouck, the Patentee, stands some distance north of the Elting Homestead across the street from our present church edifice. If we wish an appreciative realization of the antiquity of our old houses we have only to keep in mind the fact that this Abraham was the grandfather of Col. Jonathan Hasbrouck who built Washington's Headquarters at Newburgh. And it is equally gratifying to remember that a room in this same house, the kitchen of Wyntje, the widow of Abraham's son, whose six boys were own cousins to Col. Jonathan, was a famous place for cockfighting. Indeed it is a relief to discover that some of our ancestors were as prone to the weaknesses of the flesh as the rest of us.

North of the Abraham Hasbrouck House the Freer Homestead built by Hugo, the Patentee, completes the list of old houses still standing on Huguenot Street. But we cannot have an adequate idea of the street as it was when these houses were new unless we picture at

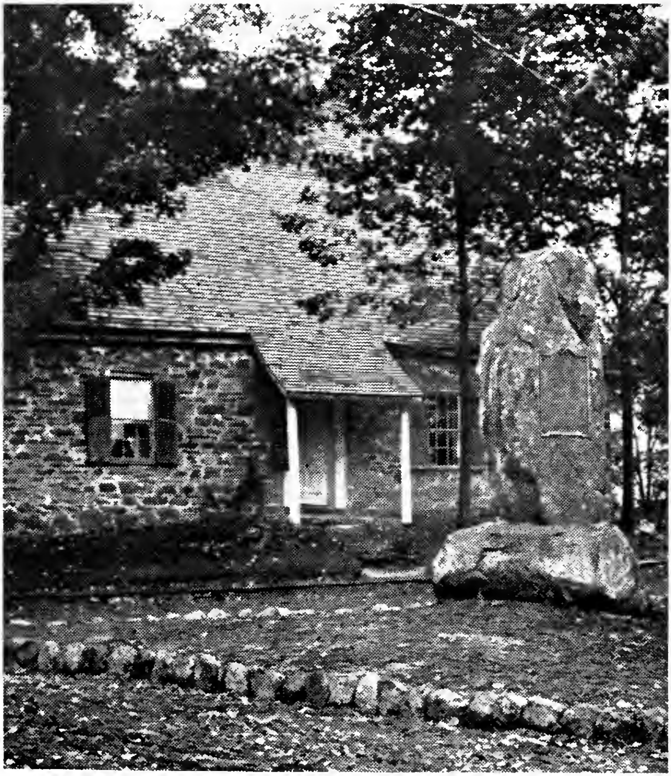
FREER HOMESTEAD

DEYO HOMESTEAD

the head of the street, opposite the Memorial House the old Deyo Homestead whose walls are still standing although remodeled beyond recognition. A stone's throw to the south of the grassy triangle where the monument in honor of the Patentees has been erected, stood the first little stone church, square, with a steep roof crowned by a cupola from which a horn was sounded in lieu of a bell to summon worshippers to meeting.

Our Church

AS THE history of the church has ever been an index to the history of the times in which she lived, so the life of "The Reformed Protestant Congregation of the New Paltz" in her varying fortunes reveals the life and thought of the people who dwelt near her altars. Although the New Paltz Reformed Church is a member of the Dutch Reformed denomination, she is separate from the other Reformed Churches in origin. It would not have been amiss to have given her a name which would have revealed her unique history. But those who gave her life did not stake spiritual energy upon a name. Whereas most of the Dutch Reformed churches sprang from the Dutch who came to America for gain, the New Paltz church claims as her forefathers those heroic souls known as Huguenots who fled from France because of religious intolerance, and who eventually came to America for religious freedom, as the Puritans had done in their day. A church which was born, not as an incident in



MONUMENT ERECTED IN HONOR OF PATENTEES

colonization for gain, but which was the life of the colonization movement, may well boast her origin.

A glance at the names on the church records reveals the cradle in which the church was rocked. One of the common names is that of LeFevre. It cannot be traced back to the illustrious Jacques LeFevre who fathered the Reformation in France, but it is no mean honor for a church to have sprung from the seed sown by that scholar. If his name has not been handed down to the New Paltz church, his teachings begat the men and women who came here as descendants of his in mind, at least.

The severe persecutions in France drove the Huguenots forth, not knowing whither. Some fled to England, some to Holland and the Lower Palatinate, or "Pfalz", on the Rhine. From Pfalz, lured by the freedom of America, a number came to Kingston, then known as Wiltwyck. From there it is but natural that they should have journeyed up the river which emptied into the Hudson at that point, and so no doubt the fertile valley through which the Wallkill flowed, was discovered. In 1677–8, the harassed but noble band pitched their last tent where the village of New Paltz now is, and called

it home. Of this band we can sing as we are taught to sing of the Pilgrim band,—

> "Aye, call it holy ground,
> The soil where first they trod
> And left unstained what there they found,
> Freedom to worship God."

The history of the church divides itself naturally into three periods, marked by the language in use. From 1677-8 until 1753 the French tongue was the language of the church and of necessity of the home and street. Toward the end of the period, there may have been a gradual giving way to the Dutch. During these fourscore and more years the church had but three ministers, and these for short pastorates. In fact, Daillé can hardly be called a minister of the church since he had the oversight of a number of churches. He was more of a domestic missionary caring for several churches as classical missionaries do now. Before coming to America, Daillé had been professor of theology in the seminary at Samur. It must have been a great boon to have listened to so cultured a voice crying in the wilderness of the New World. If the church has sought the ablest of men to lead throughout her history, the cause may be found in the impress Daillé left upon the people.

FIRST STONE CHURCH

For thirteen years this noble servant of God ministered to the little Huguenot church. He was succeeded by David DeBonrepos who served the church about four years, but who also could give but part of his time to the work in New Paltz. From 1700 to 1730 the people seem to have been without ministerial care. Near by ministers may have rendered occasional service. From 1731 to 1736 Johannes VanDriessen cared for the little Walloon flock. This unfortunate brother has been branded a schismatic by some of the church historians. He seems not to have been properly ordained and he is charged with having preached dangerous doctrine in a barn in Hurley. One wonders just what he said! Perhaps he spoke in condemnation of the convivial customs which graced barn raisings, or it may be that he urged the people to build a house of worship. It may have been easier to cry heresy than do the will of the minister! The event tells us also how far we have moved from the time when a man's ordination was of prime importance. VanDriessen served but five years, so his heretical ideas did not become engrafted. What is more noteworthy is the fact that with ministerial service denied more than sixty out of the eighty and more years, the

church grew and the religious life blossomed in service and character. The might which made Christianity triumphant in the first century, when preachers were few, but when the religious zeal was strong, was the might which kept the little band of Christians together in New Paltz amid very discouraging conditions. During those days the first public highway was built, not for commerce or for pleasure as they are built today, but that the people might go to church at New Paltz and Kingston. Better roads may be built today but no better motive ever actuated a people to construct a highway.

In 1752 the Dutch period of the church begins and extends until the end of the century. The inability to secure French ministers and the close proximity to the Dutch doubtless compelled the Huguenots to adopt the Dutch language. Let a little village keep up her mother tongue for nearly a century in the midst of a people speaking a different language, and they have waged no mean conflict. The Dutch period is marked by the Conferentia-Coetus dispute. These two parties in the church were what the Tories and Whigs were in politics. The Conferentia party held to the authority of the church across the sea. The Coetus party were for re-

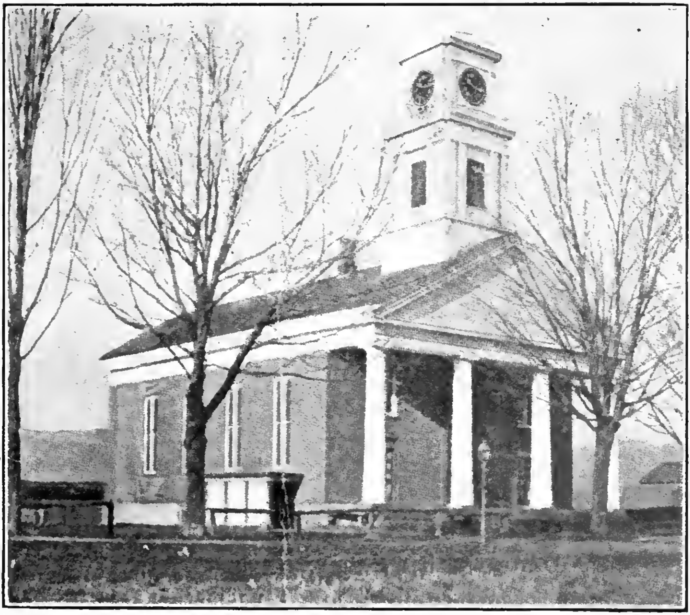
SECOND STONE CHURCH

ligious independence. As might have been expected, the Dutch element of the church very largely composed the Conferentia wing in the church. The Huguenots were of the Coetus persuasion and wisely so. This split the church for a time. During this period a new church was built by the Coetus wing. This act illustrates the spirit of the people once more. Trials were but challenges which they eagerly accepted.

From 1799 on, the English period begins. Rev. Meier who was called at that time, preached alternately in Dutch and English. A noteworthy statement in his call was,—"to be paid in good and lawful money of the State of New York." It is to be hoped that past experiences had not driven the clergy to insert this in the call. During the one hundred and twelve years which have come and gone since then, the church began to respond to the needs of her country by using the country's language. The history of those days is not dramatic or spectacular. Ministers came and went. A brick church was built in 1839, enlarged in 1872 and in 1913 the congregation of the church rose with an earnest effort under the guidance of Rev. Benjamin Jay Bush to beautify its house of worship. Such men as Stitt, Vennema, Fagg, and Huizinga,

men honored by the church at large, served as ministers in New Paltz. Each left his mark upon the community. The silent years are the most productive in history, and during the many uneventful years work of the Kingdom progressed. Weak were made strong, the broken were bound, and devoted Christian men and women proved the divinity of human nature by living lives which shone with true Christian luster.

Not least among the achievements of the past is the sending out of Rev. L. J. Shafer to Japan in 1912 as the missionary pastor of the church. This the church did while heavy demands were made upon its liberality for extensive repairs. And in this she was true to the traditions of the past, and worthy of the matchless heritage which is the just pride of every Huguenot.



DUTCH REFORMED CHURCH BUILT IN 1839

Our School

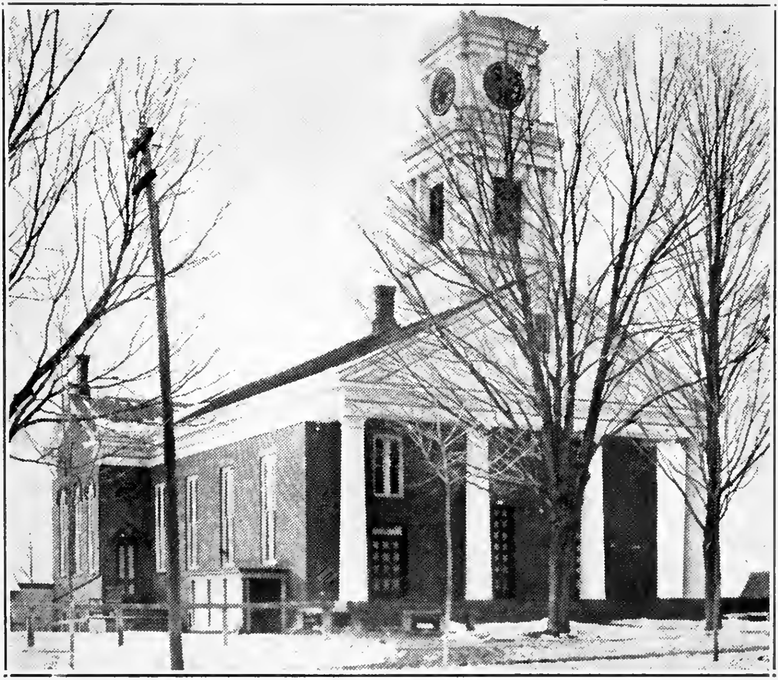
HOW many know the story of the Bell—the Bell that hangs in the Normal School building and with its strident clanging, summons young seekers after knowledge up the hill? Time has not mellowed your voice, poor Bell, but we forgive you for you have seen many ups and downs in your day and you are the link that binds our new school with the past.

Tell us how—just before Revolutionary times, wasn't it?—you were brought from the foundry in New York and hung proudly in the steeple of the new, the second stone church, for the primitive horn did not seem in keeping with a building so fine and big. Tell us how the brick church came and a new, sweet voiced bell, and you were banished to the cellar till some thrifty soul placed you in the stone school house and you began your educational career; how, later, you served in the brick public schoolhouse. Whisper how, when the public school was in disuse, you disappeared for a brief spell and how the village fathers rescued you from vandal hands out on the race track across the creek,

where your clanging started blue ribbons of the turf upon their swift careers. Scandalous, that you, a pious church bell, should have assisted at a horse race! What? You had it straight from the sexton? The domine himself? A domine of our church raced horses once, and won!

Domine Bogardus was a man so straight-laced that he leaned over backwards a little, perhaps. We're not blaming him, because at his barn-raising he substituted a pitcher of cold water and pile of temperance tracts for the usual little brown jug; but, why should New Paltz young people on the way to the Plains to see the "Training" on the one gala day of the year make a detour of miles in order to avoid the parsonage? Yes, Domine Bogardus was very good indeed, and in those days horse-racing was looked down upon as one of the seven deadly sins.

In some round-about way, perhaps in the bliss of ignorance, the Domine became the owner of a spirited horse that had been the favorite mount of a young sport, Louis DuBois, and that had often participated in contests of speed over the long level stretch of road on the Plains which served for a race course in the olden times. One Sunday when the Domine was jogging placidly



DUTCH REFORMED CHURCH REMODELED IN 1872

home from afternoon service at New Hurley, as he struck this piece of road, who but the reprobate Louis should come cantering up from behind? Shouting to the Domine's horse Louis spurred on his own, and away they both went down the track at breakneck speed, the Domine in advance. Check his horse he could not but hang on he did; and perhaps there was momentary pride in his heart though nothing but anger flashed from his eyes at Louis' conspirators stationed at the end of the course, who flung their hats into the air and shouted, "Hurrah for the Domine!" But it was not until he had left them far in the distance and reached the giant oak where the sutlers used to pitch their tents on Training Day that he succeeded in reining in his fiery charger.

Yes, the bell might tell us much that is interesting educationally and otherwise, about little old New Paltz; though for information in regard to the French school masters who in earliest times held forth in the log cabin that did double duty as church and school house we must look elsewhere.

Look! Here is the copy of a most interesting old French manuscript bearing the date 1689 and signed by the "resident proprietors of the twelve

parts of the village" certifying that—"Of our good will and to give pleasure to Jean Cottin, schoolmaster of the said Paltz, we have given him gratuitously a little cottage to enlarge for a home, situated. . . . . at the end of the street near the large Thicket. We permit also the said Cottin, him and his likewise, to cut his fire-wood and wood for building where he shall find it convenient in the woods of the said Paltz, and this forever; also, we permit always the said Cottin, him and his, to turn into the woods. . . for pasturage two cows and their calves and a mare and her colt. . . .

"Nevertheless we wish and intend that in case the said Cottin shall wish to sell the said cottage he shall not be able to sell it except to persons of good life and manners to whom we agree, and he also shall have the preference who is known as without limit approved.

"We are not obliged to keep the said Cottin for school master longer than we find proper."

Another paper dated 1700 and signed by the pastor and elder of our church testifies that "Mr Jean Tebenin having lived with us during the space of four years for school master and for the instruction of our children, has always done the duty of a good and true Christian,

FAMOUS GIANT OAK ON PLAINS

frequented our holy assemblies and partaken of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper." And Jean Tebenin's will dated thirty years later and leaving his property to the church here, contains the request that his copy of the Bible be sold and the proceeds given to the poor in case the French language should ever cease to be used.

If the French language should cease to be used! We can hardly comprehend the tragedy of those words to our ancestors in 1730, for, do what they might, their beloved mother tongue was giving place to the Dutch. And indeed, they had no weapons left with which to fight the calamity, since the old French schoolmasters were dying off and there were only Dutch ones to be had in their place. Just as the grandparents of many of us of this generation spoke only Dutch until they were sent to school and there learned English, so, probably, the grandparents of our grandparents prattled in French until at school from Dutch-speaking children and a Dutch-speaking schoolmaster they learned to use that language. How their elders resented this acquiring of a new tongue by the younger generation is shown by a story that has come down from those days, of a child sent to an uncle's house to borrow a certain article. Being able to ask for it only

in Dutch, she was indignantly refused her request until she should go home and learn to ask in French for what she wanted.

With the dying out of the French language in New Paltz there seems nothing especially noteworthy about its schools until the Academy was started almost a hundred years later. When the first stone church was torn down just before Revolutionary times its stones were drawn away to be used for the construction of a school house, though this was not built until many years afterward. Remodelled as a private residence after the erection of the brick public school building in 1874 it still stands on North Front Street. In its upper story, in 1828 a Classical School, where classical branches were given preference to English ones, began to hold sessions. The providing of a liberal education for the rising generation was ever before the minds of our forefathers, and in providing for the present they knew not how well they built for the future. This Classical School was only the forerunner of the New Paltz Academy which began its career in 1833, destined to become, fifty years later, the State Normal School of New Paltz.

The student who passed through the halls of the old Normal building saw a small framed

ACADEMY ABOUT 1840

print hanging on the wall. This print bore the date of 1835 and was the prospectus of the New Paltz Academy. The Trustees give notice "that they have erected a spacious Academy and Boarding-house. They consider this one of the best locations in the country. It is in the midst of a romantic, fertile and healthy country, retired from the noise and confusion as well as the temptations incident to thickly settled places. The communication with any part of the country is safe and easy. Mails pass and repass almost daily. Young ladies and gentlemen can be accommodated with board in respectable families for $1.50 per week."

The Academy enjoyed prosperity from the first under the able administration of Rev. Eliphaz Fay as principal, and soon it was found necessary to enlarge its building. During the later presidency of Dr. H. M. Bauscher, a most scholarly man, the school came into first rank among the academies of the State. In 1884, following soon after the Semi-Centennial celebration, the building was destroyed by fire. Undaunted, however, the community rose as one mind to the rebuilding of its school, under the able leadership of Principal F. E. Partington and Rev. Ame Vennema. The following year

Dr. Henry A. Balcom became principal, and in conjunction with the Board of Trustees was instrumental in having the school converted into a State Normal School. In December 1885 the building was formally presented to the State for the establishment of a Normal and Training School. Before February of the next year a Local Board and a provisional faculty with Dr. Eugene Bouton as principal, was appointed. During the first term the number of students in all departments was eighty-nine. From this time on the growth of the school was so rapid that it was hardly well established before the building was found to be entirely inadequate. For a time the district school house was used for the Practice School and an old shop on the grounds for drawing and gymnastics. The time soon came, however, when these makeshifts could no longer be tolerated and in two years from the cession of the property to the State, an appropriation was secured for an addition. This addition was known as the main building. Well furnished and equipped with the appliances that modern teaching demands, made beautiful by pictures and statuary, with a carefully chosen library accessible to the students at all times, with beautiful memorial win-

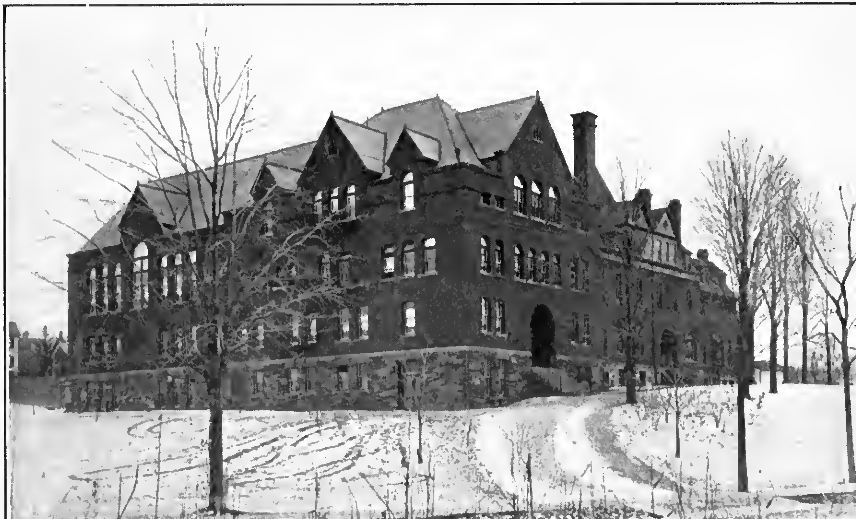
ACADEMY BUILT 1885

dows, and other gifts of a grateful body of Alumni, it was for many years a school home to which hundreds of students will always look back affectionately as an ideal spot, loved for its beauty and its associations.

Along with changes in the building came changes in the personnel of the faculty. In September 1888 Dr. Frank S. Capen, a well known teacher of mathematics at Cortland, became principal. To the work so well begun by his predecessor, he brought an energy and capability, an unselfish devotion to the interests of his students, for which the graduates of that period will never cease to be grateful. Nothing could be a better training in efficiency than to be one of his pupils. At this time the school was very large. Old students will remember how halls and cloakrooms were utilized to make room for increasing numbers. About this time, however, the length of the course was increased, the English course was abolished and training classes throughout the State were established. These changes decreased the number of students here as elsewhere. Further changes in educational policies followed. Up to this time the teaching in the Practice School was done entirely by the student

body. Students in the Normal and Academic departments were taught in the same classes, until the last year, when there were separate classes in methods and professional subjects. The teaching was carried on under the direction of principals of different departments, assisted by critic teachers. While this system was open to the objection that the child was sacrificed to the teacher, it gave us student teachers, trained in practical efficiency and the demand for them was then as now greater than the supply. Under the present system a trained teacher has charge of each grade and is assisted by pupil teachers, thus giving the students not only the opportunity to test their own powers, but to have the privilege of observing the work of a skilled teacher.

In 1899 the school entered upon another distinct period of its development under the principalship of Myron T. Scudder, A.M. Under his inspiration the school became a centre of activity. No hours were too long, no task too heavy for enthusiastic students and teachers. Initiative and a sense of responsibility were encouraged and much latent efficiency was brought out. Manual Training and Domestic Science were introduced. A Kindergarten was added. The



NORMAL SCHOOL UNTIL 1906

school stood for the principle "that the schools of this country should afford training in creating, obeying and enforcing wise regulations for self-government and that a school should be a democracy not a despotism." A system of school government, called the school city, was adopted. This, naturally, had both the virtues and defects of any real democracy.

At this period the school was opened to about seventy-five Cuban girls sent here by their government. Several Spanish-speaking teachers were added to the faculty. These Cuban girls in spite of a foreign language and new habits of life were for the most part earnest and conscientious. Arrangements were made to repeat the experiment, but the Cuban government was unable to appropriate funds. Only one remained to graduate. Most of the others returned to Cuba to teach in their own schools. The new courses, new methods of teaching in Psychology, the training of several young men for work in the Philippines brought many distinguished visitors to the school, giving it close touch with the great educational movements of the outside world.

In the midst of all this activity came a tragic interruption. In the spring of 1906 school closed for the Easter recess, to open again on a

Thursday. Tuesday night a fire broke out in the main building and before the morning dawned a scene of desolation met the eye, with nothing but a pile of smoking ruins to mark the place of the labors and sacrifices of years.

But fate had to deal with an undaunted spirit, so before sunrise plans were formulated for opening school at the appointed time. Rooms were secured, supplies hastily gotten together and on Thursday morning students and teachers returned to find, not a building, but a school thoroughly alive and ready for work. Thus for two and a half years, housed in churches, shops, public buildings, wherever there was a vacant room, the school carried on its usual activities. In spite of inconveniences, there were many bright spots. Mutual helpfulness abounded, the students and townspeople became better acquainted, inventive genius was stimulated and a strong sense of responsibility developed.

It would be too long a story to tell how the appropriation for a new building was secured. Neighboring towns appeared as rivals for the school, but the vigorous action of the Board, the personal influence of our public-spirited citizens and constant pressure from the

NORMAL SCHOOL 1915

Alumni, won the day, the victory was ours and another "spacious edifice" soon appeared, a veritable "light which is set upon a hill." The year of its completion brought its present principal, Dr. John C. Bliss of the State Department of Education. The growth and success of the school are so marked that still more additions are fast becoming indispensable. The school speaks for itself in its graduating classes of one hundred fifty or more each June.

The combining of the Regents and the Department of Education brought some changes in the course of study. We now have a separate High School, with a four years' course, and a Normal Course of two years for which graduation from a High School is required.

In this hasty review, it has been impossible to mention the members of the Local Board or the long line of teachers who have come and gone leaving a more or less deep impression on the school. Not one of the original faculty now remains in active service. For more than twenty-five years the devotion of our beloved A. K. Smiley, late President of the Board, formed a golden link in all this chain of events, the breaking of which is a permanent loss to the school.

Many of the graduates of today are the children of earlier graduates. Soon a third generation will be climbing the hill. The heralds of the old French monarchy announced the death of the old King and the accession of a new one with the words—"The King is dead—Long live the King!" Student and teacher pass—Long live The New Paltz Normal.

VIEW FROM EAGLE CLIFF ROAD

Our Mountain

TO the west of us lie "the mountains", our Shawangunk hills. Not like the casual acquaintance are they, seen today, forgotten tomorrow, but like the friends you love, known, to be kept in memory forever. Today one marvels at their beauty, tomorrow they surprise one with a surpassing glory. With every season of the year they put forth new color, with every hour of the day they reveal a new mood. Now a wandering cloud nestles close upon the hill-slope, and steals in and out among the valleys, drifting away into the unknown. Again, a veil of mist droops over the face of the hill and we are lost in wonder at the mystery she hides. Then, every field and meadow, every treetop and pathway approaches so closely in the clear air, one is tempted to call greeting to the mountain nymph. A rosy blush suffuses our hills at the first kiss of the morning. And when the day dies, she sends forth promise of a new dawn in a burst of color that bathes our whole mountain-side. Yea, you must winter and summer in our mountains, you must know them, then

will they speak to you in the language of the soul, then when you "lift your eyes unto the hills" will come strength from the God of the hills.

Here Algonquin or Iroquois chief raised his eyes to Heaven and prayed to the Great Spirit. Here followed French Huguenot ensnared by memories of the land of his birth. And here will come youth and maiden from afar, to tarry awhile, to go again. Perchance here too some seer may be born at the shrine of the mountain to carry with him a gift to the world. The hills alone will know the tale, and the hills will hold their secret.

The Shawangunk range is the northern spur of the Appalachian system, separating the Wallkill Valley on the east from the Rondout Valley on the west. To the northwest lie the Catskills, blue in the distance. Mountain loveliness is enhanced by the charm of sparkling lakes. Held high above surrounding peaks, in deep pockets in the mountains, have the waters been caught, thwarted in their hope to join the sea. A "Lake-in-the-Sky" is Mohonk, true to its Indian name.

Approaching the mountain from the Wallkill Valley, every turn of the road opens up new

ON SKY TOP

vistas. From Memorial Gateway to Sky Top is an ever-changing panorama of beauty. At a rise of fifteen hundred feet above the sea, we look down into the Rondout Valley on the one hand, range upon range of the Catskills in view. To the other side the Wallkill winds in and out, and beyond are outlined the hills on either bank of the Hudson. Southward lies Minnewaska, the Trapps loom up unexpectedly, and ever and again beautiful Lake Mohonk like an emerald gem in rare setting holds the eye. Northward Bonticou, Mountain Rest, and Guyot's Hill reveal new glimpses of the blue ranges. Crag and crevice, bluff and boulder, lichen and laurel fill us with ever increasing wonder at the generosity of Mother Nature when she called into being our mountain.

In search of a day's adventure, Mr. Alfred H. Smiley found Lake Mohonk an early summer day in 1869. Fascinated with its possibilities for development, he sent for his twin brother, Albert K., then head of the Friends' School of Providence, Rhode Island, to join him. Together they followed the narrow Indian trails. Together they climbed Sky Top. Lost in rapture as the eye ranged over the two valleys to the distant hills of sister states, the desire came

to them to obtain possession of this wonderland, this lake in the sky and to develop it for all beauty lovers who might come. Before another day dawned steps were taken to purchase it from a farmer who lived in the valley. This is the beginning of a venture which has given this locality an estate wonderful in its charm, and has made the name Mohonk known throughout all the land. From the original two hundred eighty acres it now comprises five thousand acres of mountain, lake and farmland. Fifty miles of excellent roads give a never-ending variety to pleasure driving. One of the early delights of the guests was the morning trips with Mr. Smiley, mountain stocks in hand, to explore the neighboring ravines and forests. Little by little Indian trails grew into well-worn paths until today they wind in and out, a labyrinthine maze for the seeker of the mysteries of the Shawangunks. The early vision has become reality. Scholar, artist, professional man and business man, the student, and the mother from her home have sought the mountain lake, for rest, for inspiration, have returned refreshed, strengthened for the demands of the busier life. Every year the summer months bring to our

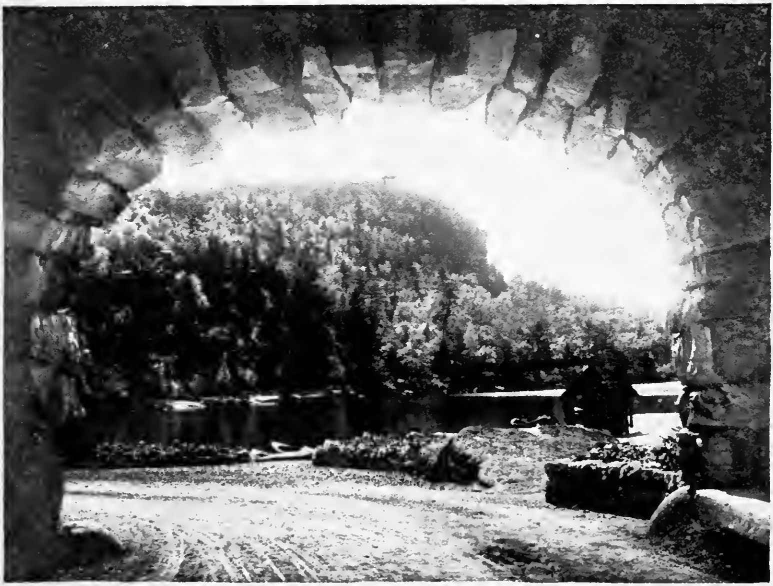
LOOKING SOUTHWARD TOWARD THE TRAPPS

mountains hundreds of the lovers of the quiet life and of the beauties of nature.

Upon the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the marriage of Mr. and Mrs. Albert K. Smiley, the guests who had learned to love Mohonk placed at the entrance of the estate the archway seen from New Paltz and known as the Memorial Gateway, a fitting token of esteem and love for the man whose name will ever be associated with Mohonk.

In 1879 Mr. Albert K. Smiley was appointed by President Hayes as member of the Board of Indian Commissioners. Four years later Mr. Smiley invited for a conference to Mohonk a group of men and women interested in the betterment of conditions for the Indian. Annually this conference has met ever since, broadening its scope in recent years to include other dependent peoples, exercising a strong influence in the creating of public sentiment, and in the revision of laws for the uplift of the less fortunate brother. Annually in the month of June since 1895 Mohonk has been the Mecca for diplomats and statesmen, in the discussion of the problem of International Arbitration. The far-reaching influence of these conferences is beyond the knowledge of our day.

Once, sitting beside his Lake-in-the-Sky, our Indian brother wafted on high the blue smoke from his peace-pipe. Today to him, a stranger in his own land, the white man reaches out the brotherly clasp of friendship. Once the Indian Holy Man prayed for peace among his people. Today his white brother breathes a prayer to the All-Father for peace among the children of men. The hills break their silence. Listen to the Voice of the hills.



VIEW LEAVING THE HOUSE

Copies can be procured of
CORNELIA E. DUBOIS, New Paltz, N. Y.